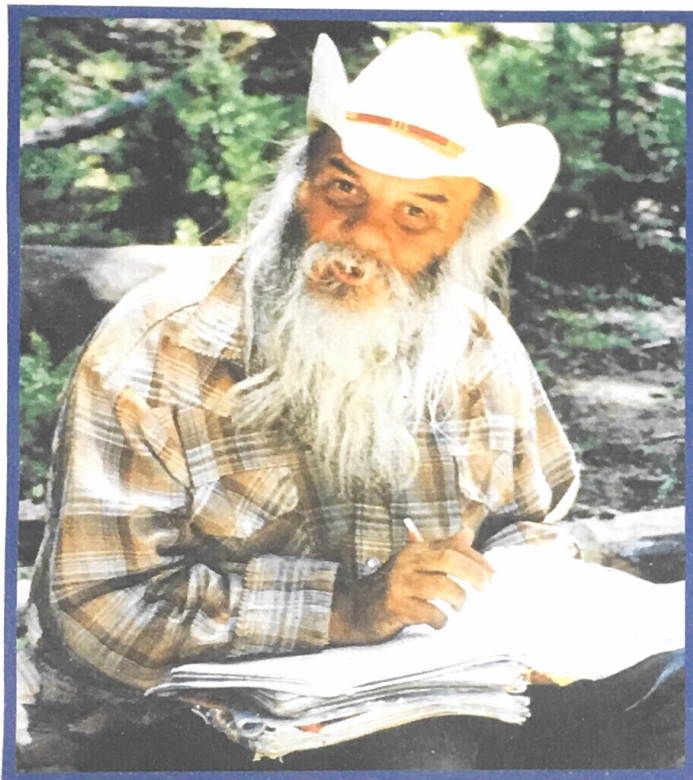




Rainbow Family

Life Stories



*by Jodey Bateman.
Interviews with Rainbow
Family of Living Light
folks conducted between
1977 and 2008.*

Scanned in 2018.

*Jodey Bateman may be
contacted on Facebook.*

or jodey.bateman@yahoo.com

05.P

STAR (with comment by Phil Coyote)
"Everybody's in the Movie"

- interviewed in 1978 at the Oregon
Gathering

STAR (with comment by Phil Coyote) Everybody's in the Movie

[Star gave me most of his life story at the 1978 Oregon Gathering, when he was doing a lot of work in the kitchen. Star described the spread of the hepatitis epidemic that caused the Healing Waters New Age resort to close at Eden, Arizona - a detailed account of a familiar s.c.o.u.g.e. of the counter-culture.]

I was born in Yakima, Washington in 1952. My father was an asphalt contractor, now retired. He's from Blackwell, Oklahoma. His relatives came to Washington during the Depression. My mother is now in Australia with my aunt, who works for the US State Department. My parents divorced when I was 12. I haven't seen them in five years. I've lived in quite a few places. My parents did a lot of traveling. When they got divorced, we lived in Wenatchee, Washington.

I hung out by myself. I've had a tendency to be a loner. I've always read a lot, ever since I was seven years old. I read a lot of occult books. I read Kerouac's On The Road when I was about 13. I've really liked Kerouac's stuff ever since. And someone turned me on to Alan Watts. At the time, it really affected my consciousness. Alan Watts made me see that there was another reality that might be more important than the reality I was in. Like my reality was that my mother and father were pushing me towards college because they couldn't go themselves when they were young.

I was a good student in school. I skipped the third grade. I was so far ahead. I started smoking marijuana when I was 16. I started eating acid when I was 17. Like I would eat four or five hits at a time. I left home on my own accord when I was 17. Mom wanted me out of the house because we weren't getting along. Like I was getting pretty high and talking to people who weren't there. I met up with a sister and we went to San Francisco. It was the first time I ever hitch hiked. By the time I got to San Francisco, things weren't happening there any more. They were starting to get bizarre and fall apart from all the speed freaks.

I was so high, I really didn't care what my name was or who I was, so I got the name Star. I'm really sensitive to a lot of energy, and yang or masculine energy in our culture is not supposed to be sensitive. That's why I was into so much acid. I was also checking out a lot of spiritual trips.

I went back to Seattle with this sister who was an artist and a poet and really into trucking around. We lived in a shack in the woods east of Seattle for \$20 a month rent. Now it's all condominiums there where I was. I supported myself from panhandling and my parents gave me some money. People living together and not married couldn't get food stamps.

My mother said she she would continue giving me the money my father paid on child support till I was 21 if I would go to college. It was like a bribe to get me back on their trips. I went to a community college for a year at Bellevue, Washington. I realized I was learning less in college than I did from books and actual life experiences, so I quit.

After I quit college, I moved to Seattle and quit drugs, including marijuana because I was getting too far from this reality. I was doing acid once and I saw my soul totally leave my body. My essence was like a big egg of cloud. I saw we are all eternal. Even though I doubt this sometimes now, it was the most profound thing I ever had happen. This experience caused me to quit acid.

I rented a house and rented out rooms to people and it was like a community and next door there was another community like us. We used to go eat at each other's house - big pots of curry. That's where I learned how to cook, which has been my profession. I was living with the same sister, but another sister turned me on to English folk music and The White Goddess, one of the most important books I've ever read. She was taking Gaelic lessons and bagpipe lessons. She got me into folklore, which I'm still into.

About that time, I saw the poster for the 1972 Rainbow Gathering in Granby, Colorado, at the Seattle Food co-op. At the time Seattle wasn't happening community-wise, so I wanted to find more people who were into communities. I got hung up with the folklore thing about living in tribes, because I saw that living with just one person, even though I loved her, was unfulfilling. I was also getting into American Indians and their tribes. A person has many needs besides physical closeness which can be fulfilled by living in a tribal

family, I feel this probably because my own family broke up when I was 12. So I hitch hiked to the Rainbow Gathering with this sister. It was hard hitchhiking. Salt Lake City was up tight and I wasn't used to the altitude. The police in Colorado made you walk on the other side of the road from traffic. People in the towns told us there was disease at the gathering and not to go. But I had just hitch hiked longer than I had ever hitch hiked before in my life and it was the first time I had ever been out of the western United States. I'm the sort of person that just doesn't turn back.

When we got to Granby, the road block had gone up. So we went to the next town and met up with a bunch of brothers and sisters and all of us walked across country to Strawberry Lake. At the gathering, everything was really friendly. People were saying, "Welcome home." It was the first time I had ever seen so many friendly people. I worked in a place at the gathering called Faith Kitchen, helping cook.

The sister I was with didn't want to go to the gathering in the first place. She was more into her own trip and just personal relationships than the tribal. I'm the first person she met that she was really close to. I talked her into going to the gathering. On the night of July 3, she took some peyote and talked me into leaving, which was my first mistake. At that time, I was really attached to her. So we sent back to Seattle. Then after we got back, our relationship started to change. We had been together for four years. We started having an open relationship, which means if she wanted to see somebody, she could and if I wanted to see somebody, I could. It's because we were afraid to leave each other.

I wasn't getting any more money from my parents. The sister was really not well, and things were really bummed out. I started smoking marijuana again and using psychedelics. We got in a big fight and she moved in with a close brother of mine. For the first time I was alone in a big city.

I started drinking a lot. For about six months, I was drinking really heavily. Then I started hitch hiking all over. I went to the Wyoming Rainbow Gathering of 1973 and just hung out. From there I bummed around.

(183)

I went to Gaskin's Farm in Tennessee for a month that winter. They let me stay there, but they wouldn't let me use my name Star because they said it was bullshit. I had to use my straight name. It was a good place to hang out, but there were a lot of weird things I didn't really care for. A lot of people were from Mississippi and Alabama and people are different in different parts of the country and they weren't in my space. And the cult around Stephen. I didn't want gurus.

So I met some people from Nova Scotia who told me about their commune there. So I hitched there in the middle of winter, froze my ass off.

When I got there, they were rich kids from New York and they all split for home after a week. I was the only person there. So then Canadian Immigration came around to see about me, so I went back to Seattle.

I hung out in Seattle with a bunch of ex-members of the Love Family. So finally it was time to head to the 1974 Gathering. I was camped out in Zion National Park for a while before the gathering. On June 29, they finally decided to move the gathering to some weird lake near St. George, Utah. There was a peyote meeting where White Dove freaked out and thought she was the goddess of peyote and laid a big trip on Kilo and Reggie. I walked away.

After that, I went to a farm at Bellingham, Washington that someone turned the Rainbow Family onto. Intermittently, I hung out with a bunch of Rainbow people at Highbridge Park in Spokane. But it was too bizarre. It was too much of a city scene. I've never seen so much drinking. Two people drowned.

From there I hopped a freight train to Santa Fe. I heard this guy named Toufan had a vision that the United States was going to collapse and everybody had to escape on horseback to Mexico from New Mexico. He talked a sister out of \$2,000 to buy horses and knives and boots. But when I got there, he had a difference with the sister. They were all camped out in the woods with the horses and the burros. They split up and Toufan got half the

(184)

supplies - none of the horses and three burros. Toufan and myself and six other people ended up walking 67 miles with the burros across the desert. Then we had a difference, and I woke up in the desert all alone with nothing but a canteen of water. So I walked to the road and hitched back to Washington.

I got a job for \$9 an hour for the city of Seattle for six months. I got really hooked on alcohol. So then I went out to the woods by myself near Bellingham. Then I split and started hitching around again. I went to Gaskin's Farm in the middle of winter for a month while Stephen Gaskin was in jail. Then I went to Nova Scotia in the winter. I ended up going back to Seattle and lived near Bellingham until the Montana Gathering and I went through this cycle again of living in the woods and hitching until the New Mexico Gathering. I went there about a month early. I got involved with the kitchen. I met Candy and Michael Sun and John Paul and started feeling really good as I started cooking. I guarded food at night and cooked a lot in the daytime with the Carnival Cafe people. I went with the Carnival Cafe people to Boulder.

I was sick, so I wired a sister in Seattle for some money and then I took a bus to Seattle. She didn't want me staying with her. So I started living with this sister I had met at the New Mexico Gathering who was into raw foods. I started eating nothing but raw vegetables and hanging out with her. That broke up in a month and I went to Santa Cruz, California and lived with some people I had met at the New Mexico Gathering. We took care of a 92 year old lady. I was going to Peru with them or to Arkansas in December. I ended up going to Fayetteville, Arkansas and working in a co-operative vegetarian cafe. So I decided on May 22 to come to the Oregon Gathering. I got here June 3 and I've been here ever since. I don't know where I'm going from here.

[At the Arizona Gathering in 1979, Star told me what had happened in the year since I had seen him last.]

This has been the year of the movie. After the Oregon Gathering I went with the Wilderness Family, with Earthworm. Earthworm had

this trip about going to the wilderness, to BLM land and living off the land, self-sufficient like the Indians. I heard him speak at the gathering and he talked with Ferenc and Tibor and me and after clean-up, we all caravanned to a spot near Medford in Southern Oregon to a little square of BLM Bureau of Land Management land surrounded by timberland. Earthworm thought no one would stop us then. We did a garden. It was real high. But I ran into some personal difficulties. So I was there just about a month. The day before I left, Tibor came down with hepatitis, which is of interest, because Earthworm caught hepatitis from him, which he later gave to Eden Hot Springs.

So I went up to pick apples and ran into the Touch the Earth Family and picked pears with them. I left them and ended up buying a truck. I picked apples with some people from the Inner Space Family and got pesticide poisoning. I borrowed \$50 from a woman named Glad and split. I went to Santa Cruz, California. In Santa Cruz I met a woman named Chaparral and we went to Eden Hot Springs. Zack and Melody were there and asked me to go to the Peace Camp at Clifton, Arizona, because they needed some strong energy there. I went there and it was like burnt out city, so I went back to the restaurant in Fayetteville, Arkansas.

I took a woman from Eden Hot Springs to Arkansas. She had hep and wouldn't admit it. She gave hep to Fayetteville and shut down half of Fayetteville, then she went to work at Green Life organic restaurant and caused a hepatitis epidemic in Austin.

I went back to Joshua Tree, California, to my sister's house and Ferenc called me and said the Wilderness Family was coming there from Oregon. Half of them came to Joshua Tree. I reconnected with them. We made it back to Eden Hot Springs, Arizona at Thanksgiving. At that time Eden was going through

this freak-out scene. There was a hepatitis epidemic there. The Rainbow Family Security Camp was there - Crazy John, Red Dave, Birdie and the others. So Fred, the co-ordinator of Eden, had a surplus of ducks. The ducks were just hanging around eating the wheat grass and the sprouts and stuff. So he asked me to ask the Security Camp

to take the ducks up to the Peace Camp for Thanksgiving Dinner. So Red Dave and a guy named Randy offered a duck in the bushes by the Eden parking lot and some kids saw them and went and told the Eden Family, who freaked out because they were into peace and non-violence, so they ran the whole Security Camp off their land. The Security Camp went up to the Rainbow Peace Camp.

I was trying to sell my truck to Healing Waters at Eden. Ferenc and Carol went up to scout out land in Aravaca Canyon for the Wilderness Family. The truck rolled and Ferenc was in the hospital for 2½ weeks. He's blind in one eye from it now. So we - the Wilderness Family - moved to the mountains above Tucson. But I wanted to go to the city, because I was into this partying space. So I went with Ferenc's girlfriend to Tucson to visit Ferenc in the hospital and we stayed in Tucson with the Inner Truth Family - a cult run by a man named Shepherd.

There were two men in the cult and 11 women. They were into mind control. When we got to their houses, they told us "Wow, you're finally come. We've been waiting for you for two weeks." They said we were the ones appointed to live with them. The Inner Truth had never heard of the Rainbow Family before, so they opened their doors and it became a crash pad. We had Kilo show up and Peanut and Billy Shawn and all the street people from the Fourth Street Park in Tucson. You can imagine what kind of house that was, I couldn't stand it. I started hitting the bottle.

The Inner Truth Family made an ultimatum that the Wilderness Family had to leave with them and go to the woods with them. The

rest of us stayed in their house until January. I split and went to Tepic, Mexico, and came down with hepatitis there from somebody from Eden. So I was trapped in Mexico knowing three words of Spanish, and I got down to 105 pounds. So I asked the Spirit what I should do and it told me to go on to the ruins of Palenque. Still yellow, I boarded the train to Palenque.

I got cured of hepatitis there and went on to Panajachel, the hippie hangout in Guatemala. When I got off the bus in Panajachel, I heard a voice yell, "Star, you stupid ass hole!" It was Bear. He was real spaced out eating downers. He was freaking out about everything.

I rented a house four doors down from Rainbow Hawk. See everybody's in the movie. Candy, Moe, Tomato, the whole Rainbow gang were down there. I tried to get along with everybody and as usual ended up everybody pissed off at me except Rainbow Hawk. I ran out of money. Bear gave me \$5 to get home on, bless his soul. Next day he flew out of Guatemala with Moe and Candy and Two Bulls. A week later he was dying of spinal meningitis.

I borrowed money from other people and took the bus 4 1/2 days non-stop to Naco, Arizona, with a woman named Kahyla. Then I went to Bisbee, Arizona. I was freaking from cultural shock of being in the United States. I got into a living by myself alcohol space. Many people dropped by to say hello and cause hell like Phil Coyote, Crazy John, Red Dave, Mountain and Chuck Wind Song, which made it so I could never return to Bisbee. There was a woman who would do anything to be with me. She had five kids and was 32 years old. She offered me money - over \$1,000 - to be with her. She had a husband and her husband had a gun. I refused all advances. Then she went after Red Dave and Crazy John and they refused. So she went with Phil Coyote to Austin - thank God.

(188)

After things mellowed out and I stopped drinking for a while, a man named Dragon Cloud came down. Then Phil Coyote and Chuck Wind Song and Gary came back. There was to be a Rainbow Family Council at Reserve, New Mexico, and I went up there with Phil Coyote and Gary. It was weird. The council didn't happen, so I split and went back to Bisbee. They were staying at a lady named Kelly's house. Kelly and Phil Coyote had broken up for the last time. We all went out drinking. Dragon Cloud was making the move on Kelly. Phil Coyote wasn't there. He was on a spiritual kick. When we got back home, Dragon Cloud wanted everybody to get in bed. I said it was a bad idea because Phil Coyote would kill everybody. I slept on the couch. About 5:30 in the morning, Phil Coyote comes. He had been sleeping outside. He grabbed Dragon Cloud by his hair and put a knife at his throat and told him to get out of the house. So Dragon Cloud took off and came back with an ax. There was a 15-minute confrontation between him and Phil - yelling and screaming, but no casualties.

Comment by PHIL COYOTE

Dragon Cloud crawled in bed with this lady I really loved and she didn't know it. Which I was breaking up with her, but it hurt my feelings. And Dragon Cloud had left his lady sleeping on the floor.

I don't know what possessed me to have the knife fight with Dragon Cloud. I could have killed him, but I didn't. He didn't think I was serious at first until I kept poking the knife at his chest. Then he ran off and got an ax. I immediately got a chair and a broom and fended off the ax and ran. Then he gave up.

My lady was up tight at first, but then she said, "I'm glad I know people like you, because you're showing me how to live on the road."

STAR (continued)

Two days later Kalya, who I'd come up with from Guatemala, was getting married in Flagstaff, so I went up to be with them. The whole trip in Bisbee had been a bummer and I wanted to be back closer to the Spirit.

(189)

When I got to Flagstaff, the first person I saw was a woman from the Wilderness Family named Maggie who invited me to crash on her floor. I was there for a month and got involved with Friends of the Hopi and the Sacred Mountain Defense Fund to save San Francisco Peaks near Flagstaff, the holy mountains of the Hopi, from being developed as a ski resort.

Then Stephen Gold from Eden Hot Springs and David Israel, a former Love Family member, came and said they needed strong people to help get it together at the Arizona Rainbow Gathering. In which case they asked me to come.

I had a vision in Flagstaff that I had to clean up my act - no more alcohol or meat, no more coffee. No more of the Low Consciousness Club - trying to see if we could talk women into coming over to get laid. No more of that.

So here I am at the Rainbow Gathering, soaking wet from rain, but I'm happy to be here.